background information

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THE CHRISTIAN AND RACE RELATIONS

		Page
I.	Racial and Ethnic Tension: Political Implications In International Affairs	1
II.	The Student Sit-In Protest Movement: Implications For Race Relations in the United States	5
III.	Caste In Transition	11
IV.	The White Australia Policy and the Christian	17
V.	Maori and Pakeha: Race Relations Problem in New Zealand	21
VI.	The Church in Africa Amidst Racial and Ethnic Tensions	27

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Notes on the contents of this issue.

Readers of Background Information will be pleased to know that since September 1960 the World Council of Churches has established a Secretariat on Racial and Ethnic Relations within the Department on Church and Society. This particular issue has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Race relations, however localized, have international implications. We are happy to present an article by Mr. Philip Mason, O.B.E., Director of the Race Relations Institute in London, dealing with this topic.

The so-called "Sit-in Demonstration" organized by thousands of students in the southern states of the U.S.A. has received much attention throughout the world. What this movement means to race relations in the U.S.A. is critically assessed by Dr. Herman H. Long, Director, Race Relations Department, American Missionary Association, and Professor in the Department of Sociology, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

Though not a "colour" problem, caste in India presents one of the most difficult issues in the area of inter-group relations. We are pleased to present by permission, a shortened version of Dr. A.P. Barnabas' sociological analysis of "Caste in Transition" which appeared in Religion and Society, Vol. V, No. 3.

Australia and New Zealand are faced with two similar problems in the field of race relations. Two addresses delivered in Australia deal with the racially restrictive immigration policy; one by Mrs. M.G. Wyllie challenging the Christian to look squarely at the issue, and the other by the Rev. Alan Walker showing the direction in which Christian thinking should move.

The Very Rev. J.G. Laughton, former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, has lived all his life among the Maori people. He writes of the problem of the relationship between the white majority and the indigenous minority. Knowing the problem is the first step towards its solution. This article has been adapted, by permission, from the author's "Stating the Problem" appearing in Maori and Pakeha in Church and Community, September 1960.

In thinking of the Christian responsibility in relation to racial and ethnic tension, knowledge of the situation in many parts of Africa is of crucial importance. Mr. Henry F. Makulu, M.B.E., who comes from Northern Rhodesia, is at present one of the resident directors of the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Institute at Château de Bossey. His article has been adapted from a lecture he delivered to the Theological Faculty of the University of Geneva.

An item of news

In the Union of South Africa the member churches of the World Council of Churches, i.e:

Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa
Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican)
Congregational Union of South Africa
Methodist Church of South Africa
Ned. Gereformeerde Kerk Van De Kaap Provinsie
(Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa of the Cape Province)
Ned. Gereformeerde Kerk Van Transvaal
(Dutch Reformed Church of Transvaal)
Nederduits Hervormde Kerk Van Afrika
(Dutch Reformed Church of Africa)
Presbyterian Church of South Africa

after several months of intensive preparation, had a week long consultation on the "Christian attitude toward race relations" in December 1960, with a special commission appointed from the World Council of Churches itself:

Dr. Franklin Clark Fry (USA) Chairman of the Central Committee
Dr. W.A. Visser't Hooft (Netherlands) General Secretary
Dr. Wilhelm Niesel (Germany)
Mr. Charles Parlin (USA)
Bishop Lakdasa DeMel (Ceylon)
Sir Francis Ibiam (Nigeria) Unable to attend due to being installe
as Governor of Eastern Nigeria

Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer, Director of Division of Studies, W.C.C. and Mr. Fred van Wyk, Associate Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations, served as co-secretaries.

A statement of historical significance was issued by the consultation, which is now available in print. Copies may be obtained from the offices of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, London and New York, as well as from the member churches in South Africa.

I

RACIAL AND ETHNIC TENSION: POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By

Philip Mason, O.B.E.

The dangers arising from tensions between groups of people are of four kinds, and it does not much matter whether the differences from which they spring are thought of as political, ethnic, or religious. First there is the obvious danger that enmity may turn to violence, that one party may even massacre the other when the chance occurs. This happened in the Punjab in 1947 between Sikhs and Muslims; it has happened in Yugoslavia between Croats and Serbs; it happened all over Europe in the seventeenth century; it has happened between Hausas and Yorubas, between Zulus and Indians. There is secondly the danger that one party may be so strong that it can deny liberty to members of the other or a third party may establish its rule over both because of their differences. This is a danger in itself, but from it a third arises, that if dictatorship of one group over another lasts long, both the ruling and the ruled will deteriorate in moral quality. Fourth, from such tensions as we are thinking of there may arise suspicions which poison the international atmosphere and affect the relations of states not directly involved, sometimes even causing war. It is with these that this article is concerned.

It is as well to bring clearly into the open the assumptions on which any argument proceeds. Behind this article, the first axiom is that political freedom is something good to be sought by man on earth. Political freedom means that, provided the rights of others are treated with a civilised respect, every man has the opportunity to develop his own nature to the limits of which it is capable; in particular, he has the right to express his views, however different they may be from those of the government. A Christian commentary on the search for political freedom in times of tension has recently been published by Dr. Edgar Brookes of South Africa under the title The City of God and the Politics of Crisis. Writing as a South African, from the heart of bitter tension, Dr. Brookes lays stress on the value of crisis in the life of a nation as of an individual, and on the point that for a Christian the search for political freedom on earth must always be made with eyes fixed on the Civitas Dei. This affects the spirit in which political freedom is sought and the methods used but not the desirability and indeed necessity of seeking it.

There is another preliminary point to be made. It is sometimes suggested that racial tension is in some way different from other kinds of animosity between groups. But nearly all of those who have studied this question would say something much nearer to the reverse. Tensions can hardly arise unless people fall into groups which are felt to be different, and of course the easier it is to see at a glance that people are different, the easier it is to treat them differently. That is to say, the machinery of discrimination is easier to operate when there is a visible, physical difference. But the causes of discrimination seem to be much the same, whether the two groups look alike or look different. There is sometimes a reluctance to share power and privilege with someone else; sometimes there is a fear of losing freedom; sometimes there is a fear of being discriminated against and unable to get a well-paid job, a share in the benefits the State administers, thefear of authority. Or there may be the fear of not being able to practise one's religion. These are motives which lead people to deny freedom to others, to fight for their own freedom; they may arise from differences of religion or of language or simply of class just as much as of race.

But in the world today tensions arising from differences of race have a special importance. It is possible to think of the world as divided into the 'haves' and the 'have nots', that is to say the developed and the underdeveloped countries. Unfortunately it also happens that the 'have' countries are nearly all inhabited by people whose racial stock stems originally from Europe and who belong to what is loosely and rather curiously called the 'white' race.

This in itself - this alignment of the wealthy with the white - would not matter so much if the great increase of technical achievement and power among the white peoples in the 19th century had not led to rule by them over other people and to much that is now felt to be a humiliation. There are also memorie of slavery. The two greatest colonial powers, Britain and France, are steadily divesting themselves of the remnants of their old Empires. But the credit they win by a readiness to step down in some of their former territories is shaken by what the rest of the world regards as evidence that many Englishmen and Frenchmen - not to mention many North Americans - continue to feel a superiority to the other peoples of the world which they officially deny. Little Rock, Algeria, Nyasaland, Kenya, South Africa, Notting Hill - all these are words which in varying degrees carry reminders of a past arrogance. They rouse emotio which surely influence everything that happens in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Let us examine one particular situation in the light of these general point The present position in what was once the Belgian Congo is, of course, one example of the difficulties which arise during the aftermath of Colonialism. But there are special features which make the Congo of particular importance in the international scene today. Ten years ago Belgian rule was in some quarters praised as the best in Africa. The Belgians, however, did not until quite recently envisage leaving the Congo; their plans were made on an unstated assumption that they would be there indefinitely. When they decided that the Congo could no longer be insulated against the forces of Nationalism which were boiling up all over Africa they left almost at once.

It is commonly said that the crises which followed in the Congo arose because there were no Africans in high positions in the armed forces, in the police, administration and in general throughout the territory. This, however, is by no means the whole story. It may be another reason for the crisis that there were hardly any well-established institutions through which the African people could express their interests. Trade Unions were not encouraged nor was the discussion of political matters in the newspapers. Until recently, there were no political parties, not indeed anywhere where political parties could express themselves. It is surely a necessary condition for the successful working of democracy that stresses should be brought out into the open and worked out, that there should be organised groups which express the various antagonistic interests. This supplies means by which leaders can come to the fore and gain experience; it gives outlet to inevitable tensions; it provides means by which one set of interests can be balanced against another. It substitutes party and opinion for divisions based on tribe or caste.

There was a third element in the situation. The underlying assumption of Belgian rule in the Congo was that if the man who was no longer living in tribal surroundings was given adequate wages, food and housing, and no opportunity to compare his lot with anyone else's, he would be reasonably contented. This is not in fact true; man does not live by bread alone and it is when his most elementary needs have been met that he begins to want freedom. And the suggestion that it is enough to meet these elementary needs is in essence slighting; to the Congolese it was clearly felt to be wounding.

No doubt there were other causes besides these for the fact is that something like anarchy supervened in the Congo and that it became necessary for the United Nations to intervene. There seemed at first some hope that from chaos and disruption in the Congo there might emerge for the world some good in the form of a United Nations of more imposing stature. This hope has proved illusory and among the reasons for its failure a high place must go to the deep suspicion lying between the nations I have called the 'have nots' and those I have called the 'haves', a suspicion bred by resentment at what is believed to be racial arrogance. Clearly this is not the only factor; the Russian desire to establish influence in the Congo is obviously another, and one which seeks to use racial hostility for its own purpose.

But even with Russian aims as they are, how different things would be if the smaller nations felt a firm trust in the larger! Distrust means that it is the forces of the smaller nations only which can be used by the United Nations; this is surely one weakness. Surely too it is a weakness that the choice of men for the highest posts must be taken from the smaller or uncommitted powers; many men of ripe experience are disqualified. And surely here - more than anywhere else almost in history - experience would have been of value. Surely it ought to be the first task of the United Nations in the Congo to set up quickly a government which would have some popular support and which would take control. Surely, if the larger nations had been trusted, the United Nations could have acted with far greater decision and might have given the secretary-general powers that would have made it possible for him to reach a solution.

As things are, it seems that the United Nations forces may have prevented the worst consequences of anarchy, but at the same time created a stalemate in which the various forces cannot settle among themselves where power is eventually to lie.

The same kind of suspicion operates internally in many of the new countries which have recently become independent. A politician needs more than human courage or else immensely solid popular support if he is to ride against these strong tides. He is almost bound to compete with his fellow-politicians in order to prove his freedom from the contamination of colonialism and subservience to the races who have so often shown themselves arrogant. Nor is this confined to Africa; it infects the whole sphere of international affairs. It is active in the foreign policy of India. It is to be seen in the policies of the Latin American republics, who resent not only the strength and wealth of the United States but also their differing attitudes to the question of colour. This is certainly a considerable factor in the danger spot of Cuba; it is surely not absent from that other danger spot of Laos.

There is an even deeper danger. There is a widespread belief that organised Christianity has been on the side of Colonialism and oppression, at least as an abettor if not as a principal; whereas it is often believed that communism, which is hostile to religion, has also been against this kind of oppression. That this belief will not bear a moment's examination does not alter the fact that it exists.

There is then widespread suspicion, much of which owes its origin to a sense on one side of racial superiority and on the other of resentment; this suspicion is a constant and dangerous factor in international relations. The moral which this points for the great powers is to set their own houses in order and do all they can to outlaw discrimination internally and at the same time so to direct their foreign policy as to demonstrate their disinterested motives.

II

THE STUDENT SIT-IN PROTEST MOVEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR RACE RELATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

Dr. Herman H. Long.

For the period encompassed by the beginning of the second World War and the present, no reliable observer of the American scene would deny that in fact the character of race relations and the status of minorities have undergone changes of revolutionary dimension. The major events which describe the profound advances toward equal rights and opportunities are probably well known, and in order to see the significance of the present period one needs only to call to mind the previous forty or more years, beginning with the turn of the century, in which racial discrimination and segregation were indeed supported in public policy and the political and moral forces necessary for constructive change seemed frozen into deadly immobility.

If the dramatic and challenging events of 1960 are to have full meaning, they must be seen in the context of this fundamental and rapidly accelerating process of change focussed largely upon the South but expressing itself in the political and economic life of the entire country. The student sit-in protest movement and the response it has generated is by all odds the "great event" in current developments; it dwarfs everything else in importance - the political conventions, court decisions, school desegregation advances and new forms of segregationist resistance included. It has been aptly described as the beginning of the culminating drive for the complete elimination of all forms of segregation on the part of Negro leadership, an effort which, within the short space of a few months, has already shaken the system of segregation to its foundations. Like a breath of fresh air in an otherwise stale racial atmosphere, it has brought a new, dynamic and refreshing departure.

Sparked by the decision of four Negro students at North Carolina A. and T. College in Greensboro last January to sit at a Woolworth five-and-ten store lunch counter and seek to buy food, remaining in their seats for the rest of the afternoon if they were refused, a chain reaction of similar efforts on the part of Negro students ensued which quickly grew to the proportions of a mass protest direct action movement. In less than four month's time, practically all of the southern and border states and most of the major cities within these states had experienced sit-ins, picketing and other types of public demonstrations aimed at the singular objective of eliminating segregation in public facilities. Such key border cities as Baltimore, St. Louis and Kansas City were involved, and in the deeper South: Richmond, Raleigh, Greensboro, Charlotte, Durham, Atlanta, New Orleans, Nashville, Miami, Jacksonville and Louisville, to mention

only a few. The force and thrust of the movement led to demonstrations in several small cities and towns where segregation is more deeply entrenched and rigorously defended by force; and soon such out of the way places as Sanford, Florida; Rock Hill, South Carolina; Huntsville, Alabama and Monroe, North Carolina, appeared in the news accounts.

A strong sympathetic response arose in the North on the predominantly white college campuses and in the principal cities. Student councils, student religious organizations, impromptu groups and individual students sent telegrams; picket lines were formed in front of the local establishments of the national chain stores - Woolworth, Kress, Grants, McCrory and others; motorcades and visiting groups of students appeared on the southern college campuses and ties of personal interest were formed. A movement designed originally to express the concern of Negro students in the specific and complex southern situation, in these and other respects, assumed the proportions of national interest among a younger generation impatient with the racial proscriptions and senseless taboos of the past.

Meanwhile, intense and continuous campaigns were prosecuted in such places as Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro, Nashville and Atlanta; and they were combined with daily strategy sessions by the student leaders and public mass meetings in which the larger Negro communities participated. While police action against the demonstrators was more restrained and thoughtful, in contrast to the traditional southern pattern, it nevertheless assumed the character of reprisal and repression. Arrests of Negro participants on counts of trespassing, loitering, disturbing the peace and conspiracy to obstruct trade mounted into the thousands. Programs of counter-action were initiated by Negro leaders in the form of economic boycotts - "selective" or "restricted buying" programs, as they were called by the leaders - aimed either at specific discriminating stores or at the entire downtown business area. The public press, first negative and doubting in its attitude toward the new direct action movement, later became more sensitive to the simple injustice which these developments highlighted and to the growing public sentiment building up toward the students' cause. Editorial comment on February 22 by the Richmond News Leader, usually conservative on matters involving race, is indicative of this trend:

> "Many a Virginian must have felt a tinge of wry regret at the state of things as they are, in reading of Saturday's 'sitdowns' by Negross in Richmond stores. Here were the colored students, in coats, white shirts, ties, and one of them was reading Goethe and one was taking notes in a biology text. And here, on the sidewalk outside, was a band of white boys come to heckle, a ragtail rabble, slack-jawed, black-jacketed, grinning fit to kill, and some of them, God save the mark, were waving the proud and honored flag of the Southern States in the last war fought by gentlemen. Eheu! It gives one pause."

By summer it was apparent that discrimination against Negro citizens in public stores and facilities had developed into a major national issue and that a public demand existed for its resolution. This was a presidential election year, the time for the two major parties to marshall their total resources in the effort to win national political leadership for the next four years.

When the two parties met in convention in mid- and later-summer to select presidential candidates and formulate the important policy commitments which the parties would make in their platforms, both included in these commitments support of the principle and basic objective underlying the student sit-in protest movement. Because of the nature of the two-party political process in the United States, party platforms are consciously designed to alienate as few segments of the electorate as possible and provide a broad appeal to the country at large; and yet, clear commitment was given to a specific and delicate racial objective which had lain dormant as a national issue since the days of reconstruction. There is no precedent in American race relations for such rapid crystallization of an issue in the political process.

II

Why did a movement of such scope and effectiveness develop and win the support of large segments of the Negro community and the larger community as well in an amazingly short period of time? The answer probably lies, first, in the nature of the movement itself and in its philosophy and tactics; second, in the current prevailing sentiment and orientation of the Negro community and its leaders; and, third, in factors in the intergroup relations situation generally which are independent of the movement but at the same time indirectly supportive of its success.

Beyond all other considerations, perhaps, is the fact that the movement is essentially an embodiment of the philosophy of non-violent protest against injustice and tyranny and the appeal to love as both the source and basis of reconciliation in human affairs. This is not only the rationale upon which the movement rests, it is also its power, and even its major tactic. Marion A. Wright, distinguished lawyer and southern white liberal, has observed that there is"a jarring contrast between the gentle and human philosophy of non-violence and the prevailing spirit and mood" of a South historically wedded to violence as a substitute for law. In describing the movement as the rebirth and re-application of a time-honoured idea, he added: "And so by way of Walden Pond in the words of Thoreau, by way of India and the salt marches of Gandhi, by way of Montgomery, Alabama in the person and example of Martin Luther King, Jr., the idea on February 1, 1960 entered a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina."

Certainly the fact that the movement is directed, led, participated in, and controlled by Negro young people is of further paramountcy. Vitality, courage, persistence, willingness to take risks and to try the unchartered and dangerous courses of action have characterized the protest and sit-in effort - these are the qualities of youth and its still unfettered energy and spirit. In a practical and discerning way, the Negro young people seem to have sensed that they are able to do what their own parents and elders are restrained from doing, either by economic necessity and vulnerability or the inhibiting influence of adulthood itself. Negro adults have been involved, both as parents and community leaders - in providing support for the movement, in getting legal assistance and providing bail - but the movement has remained essentially a young people's effort. Negro young people, in effect, have kept their own role clear, and they have dared to lay claim upon the kind of immediate future which they, themselves, want.

In addition to these considerations, the movement has been loyal in its actual performance to the principle of non-violent protest and reconciliation. The demonstrations have been well-organized, carefully planned, sharply-aimed; they have had the tone of religious dedication and fervor; and while the young demonstrators have been the victims of being spat upon, cursed, pushed, hit and other forms of violence and intimidation, they have refused either to hit back or even enter into argumentation with their tormentors. And, above all, they have maintained and personified a quiet and firm dignity. They have been their best salesmen, and won for themselves and their cause a quality of sympathy, understanding and identification within the white community not otherwise possible

This response to Negro leadership is both new and important, for it is a response that is basically personal, extending over the wide range of mild surprise and enchantment at the new face of an entire generation to the warmth of admiration and affection. To this extent the movement has become a moral one, not only in the claims advanced by the leaders in a free and full human dignity, but in the quality of response it has begotten from a usually anxious, suspicious, resisting public. Almost always where the issue has arisen businessmen have been willing to admit the moral right of the Negro students to have food and refreshment from their public counters, but the basis of their refusal has been on legal and economic grounds - the inviolability of their private property and the possible loss of income from white clients. In similar way the political leaders of several cities and states, in seeking a middle view on the matter, have admitted the moral rightness of the students' case while expressing doubt as to the legal and tactical appropriateness of the protest action. These are, of course, mere tokens of the general public response, but they are important enough to suggest that the movement has won significant moral ground and that, indeed, it has succeeded in projecting the problem of racial discrimination on a moral basis for the first time in more than three generations.

The Negro community, both North and South, has undergone a profound psychological re-orientation over the past fifteen or more years as to its rights and the means and possibilities of obtaining them. This is the second major factor which helps to explain the success of the student non-violent protest movement. It is represented in The New Republic Magazine's quotation of Martin Luther King in summarizing the meaning of this new movement: "What the sit-ins say is that southern Negroes will no longer be satisfied with segregation in any form." Negro leadership is thus stating its objectives not in terms of partial, qualified and gradually-achieved rights but, rather, in terms of absolute and immediately possessed rights. The day of the "Appointed" and prestige leader, and of the "Uncle Tom" leader is gone. The time is now rather than some uncertain tomorrow. It is this recognition of self-hood which accounts for a Montgomery and Tallahassee Boycott, for the urgent demand for the right to vote, for the presence of Negro plaintiffs in court suits against segregation, for the decision of parents to send their "tender warriors" to schools opened for desegregation, against overwhelming odds of economic retaliation, physical violence, threat and intimidation. This is the basic soil which produced the student sit-in protest movement. In speaking for themselves the students also speak and dramatize the prevailing sentiment of the Negro community. Indeed, the protest movement has brought a consolidation and broader alignment

of purpose within the Negro community than ever achieved previously.

And finally, as to the factors independent of the protest movement which aided its success, the number is too large for discussion. We can only mention a few which appear to be crucial: (1) the growing and significant strength of the Negro voter in national elections and the determinative power of the Negro vote in mayoralty campaigns in southern cities where Negroes have free access to the franchise and comprise from a third to about 40 percent of the population; (2) the growing economic strength of the Negro in the expanding industrial life of the South and the increasing dependence of southern economic growth upon Negro manpower and purchasing power; (3) the rise of a large, articulate, intelligent Negro middle class, as illustrated by what is almost a doubling of the Negro college population within a generation; (4) the increasing proportion of Negroes in the population of big cities and the corresponding dispersion of whites to suburban areas; (5) the softening effect of the experience of successful desegregation on trains, interstate and local buses, colleges, public golf courses and other facilities; and (6) the possible need of an outlet to the political stalemate on the public school desegregation issue in the deep-South communities - the choice, in other words, of some other and seemingly easier alternative for an expression of the constructive moral, political and economic forces now operating in the race relations situation.

These are only some of the factors, but it is important to underscore the economic. Negro purchasing power in the South, it is estimated, has grown to over two billion dollars. At the same time, as the Negro population has increased both numerically and percentage-wise in the big cities with corresponding dispersion of whites to underlying city areas, the downtown commercial establishments have grown more and more dependent upon Negro buying. Any significant loss in buying, especially in the large-volume and small margin of profit businesses, therefore, is bound to have a crucial effect. It should be pointed out, in this connection, that the sit-in demonstrations, in and of themselves, did not produce the break-through in desegregating the public eating facilities; it was the effect of partial and sometimes almost total economic boycott on the part of the adult Negro community which set changes in motion. This economic reality, of which a large segment of the white business community is increasingly aware, will have far-reaching effects in the struggle of the Negro southern citizen for other rights and opportunities.

III

It is reported that now, some ten months since the sit-in movement took on full momentum, lunch counter and other types of eating facilities have been desegregated in a hundred or more communities of the south and border states. This does not mean complete desegregation of these facilities but rather of some; but, however limited the change in terms of local situations - one or two lunch counters in one locality and perhaps as many as ten in another - it nevertheless represents a broad sweep of adjustment across the South at large. In many instances the break-through has applied to all of the principle objectives of the sit-in protest, that is, lunch counters in variety and department stores, as in the case of Nashville, Tennessee. For such border cities as Baltimore, St. Louis and Oklahoma City, desegregation of public eating facilities has

proceeded on so many department store, drug and five-and-ten store fronts as to constitute a general pattern of eliminating racial exclusion. In these developments many observers see the end of segregation in public facilities, both public and private, over the major part of the southern area within a forseeable future. When public practices and public behaviors change, as in these instances, so does the old-age and encrusted racial etiquette. The mystica taboo is broken and it will no longer carry the effectiveness it once had in sustaining the larger pattern of racial segregation.

As important as these concrete developments are, it must be emphasized that the processes which brought them into existence are of equal significance. They involve a wide range of discussions, conferences, institutes, forums, committee negotiations and face-to-face bargaining on the part of Negro and white leadership in the South. More than a score of interracial citizens' committees and official mayor's committees - in one instance an official governor committee - have come into existence. In every case their aim has been to bring an immediate constructive solution to the problem of racial exclusion in public eating facilities, libraries, bus and train stations. They represent a new and different kind of initiative on the part of interracial groups which has broken the stalemate of silence and polite association characteristic of these groups for a long period of years. Instead of maintaining a facade of communication under a kind of "gentlemen's agreement" which has avoided a direct and frank attack upon the demanding and serious racial problems, the Negro and white communities have now engaged in a meaningful communication of concrete needs and interests. Strains and tensions have been produced in this shift of relationship and expectation, to be sure, but new understandings and ways of responding have emerged which have permitted what is in effect a re-consolidation of Negro-white relationships.

The task is not done, of course; it has only begun. A new frontier of action and counter-action has been drawn, and when it approaches the diehard situations in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and Louisiana a greater marshalling of forces will be needed. But the demand has been created and the issue joined, and the alignment of interest on behalf of change not only involves leaders of the Negro community but substantial elements of the white business and religious community as well. This is part of the dynamic of the new race relations situation in American today.

III

CASTE IN TRANSITION

By

A. P. Barnabas

Every society recognises differences of status among its members. In some societies, the stratification is so rigid that it is almost impossible for one to change his status. In others, mobility is not too difficult. The caste system is one of the more rigid forms of social stratification.

"A caste may be defined as an endogamous, and hereditary subdivision of ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with such other divisions." (Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences.) Two other definitions may also be noted: "A collection of families or a group of families bearing a common name, claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling, and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community." (Risley.) "An endogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups bearing a common name, membership of which is hereditary arising from birth alone, imposing upon its members certain restrictions in the matter of social intercourse, either (1) a common traditional occupation, or (2) claiming a common origin, or (3) both following such an occupation and claiming such an origin and generally regarded as forming a single homogeneous community." (Blunt.)

These definitions give a clue to the features of the caste system. To discover whether the caste system is undergoing change, it would be necessary to understand its various features and analyse whether any of them are changing.

Features of the Caste System

1) Restrictions of Food.
2) Restrictions on Marriage.
3) Residential and Other Restrictions.
4) Exclusiveness.
5) Hereditary Occuption:- There are those who hold that the caste system has never succeeded in confining the castes to separate professions. Prof. Ghurye states, "...for there were groups of occupations like trading, agriculture, labouring in the fields, and doing military service which were looked upon as anybody's business, and most castes were supposed to be eligible for any of them. Among artisans, occupations which were more or less of the same status were open to members of those castes without incidental degradation." Incidentally, it may be mentioned here that some of the occupations were supposed to be of higher calling.

6) Hierarchy:- "Everywhere in India there is a definite scheme of social precedence amongst the castes with the Brahmins at the head of the hierarch The restrictions of marriage, dining and of occupation are the consequences of the desire to maintain the "social precedence". As said earlier, some sort of hierarchy is present in every society. What makes the caste syster different is that the status of the individual is fixed at birth and to some extent related to the occupation.

7) Authority:- In every caste there exists within it an organisation with varying degree of power, "which compels obedience of the caste members". In some castes there is a very formal rigid organisation. In others, particularly among Brahmins and some other high castes, there is only an informal organisation which gets together occasionally and the way they exercise authority is to create public opinion. These organisations are called "panchayats" and are referred to as caste-panchayats. Each sub-caste and at times even sub-sections of it tend to have a panchayat of its own.

8) Segmental Division of Society:- Each caste lives for itself and in itself. The loyalty of the caste members does not go beyond the caste. The result of it all is the division of the people into small units which, according to Panikkar, "render the development of any common social feeling impossibl In fact, it is the negation of the idea of society". The caste system divides society into segments.

New Factors of Change and New Forms of Caste Exclusiveness

Is the caste system on the wane and is it just a matter of time before we bury the system? Or are caste and casteism still dominant forces? To answer these questions there is need to study the factors which are influencing the caste system, and see how these factors are changing the features of the system.

(1) Political Factors. - The Constitution of India recognises the fundamental rights of freedom and social equality. It declares that the State shall strive to promote social welfare, accept the full implications of democracy and develop an order in which justice is based on equality. These principles undermine the very foundation of the caste system.

As a direct result of the Constitution, the following factors have emerged influencing the caste structure of society. As the result of adult franchise many social groups have become aware of their strength to wield power. A Seminar on Casteism held in New Delhi noted: "Adult franchise which prevails today means that a great number of votes are cast in favour of an elector's caste. This is explicitly recognized during elections". Even the Communists in Andhra Pradesh tried to find candidates who had the proper "social base". Since voting is on a caste basis, the voters do not understand that it is immoral to demand that the elected minister help his caste folk. Hence, corruption and nepotism are rampant. Secular political parties ought to cut across caste. But a study of the factions in parties and the various troubles of State ministri will easily show that they are manifestations of casteism.

The establishment of panchayats is another consequence. Here again, each caste has become conscious of the power it can wield. The members are selected to the panchayat very often on the basis of caste, with an attempt to have the various caste groups represented in the panchayat. There is nothing wrong in this. But the members vote on various issues not from the view-point of the total community but of exclusive caste interests. However, establishment of the panchayat has helped to bring representatives of all the castes together in one organisation which ultimately may help in developing a sense of community. The caste panchayats are still strong and in social behaviour people are conscious of the necessity to abide by caste rules to escape ostracism.

(2) Fight Against Untouchability. - Untouchability is the worst feature of the caste system. If the caste system had not developed it, there may have been many more who would have upheld the system. The Government at the Centre and in the States are doing all they can to remove untouchability through legislative work, anti-touchability propaganda, provision for wells, stipends and scholarships for education, etc. The Untouchability Act passed by the Union Government is applicable to all States. In most States special efforts are made to give employment to the Harijans. As a result of these efforts, the educational standard of the Harijans has gone up and their economic condition has also improved, but these have not changed their social status. "Unless there is a thorough change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus, it is well nigh impossible for the Harijans to enjoy the equal status granted to them under the law of the land," says the Secretary of the Madras Harijan Sevak Sangh.

No doubt, legislation alone does not change society; and social laws affecting the caste system should be viewed at best as no more than the definition of ultimate objectives to be achieved. In spite of the laws, the practices continue. Laws which give greater status to the Harijans are passed by the higher caste members of the legislative assemblies, because they have to show sympathy with the ideals set by the Congress Party and also because the Harijans have strong voting power. Social reformation is voted more for convenience rather than from conviction. As Prof. Srinivas aptly points out, there is overt acceptance of the legislation, but covert sabotage. It may be of interest to note that there is a move afoot in Varanasi to build another Vishwanath temple on private property (so that Government cannot interfere) now that the original temple has been "polluted" by the entry of Harijans. In a village which I studied, 50% of all the population and 75% of Harijans did not know that Harijans could enter temples. Actually, 40% thought it was wrong to allow Harijans to enter temples. In a "model village" built by Uttar Pradesh government, the Harijan Colony was about two furlongs away from the main village.

(3) Economic Development. - The developments of transport and communications, of industries and industrial urban centres, and of new patterns of economic organisation minimise the rigidity of the caste system. In trains and buses, in cities and factories, in hotels, cinema halls and clubs, people are thrown together irrespective of caste. And it has influenced their outlook.

Nevertheless, physical proximity has not resulted in social intercourse across caste boundaries in any large measure. The hostels, clubs, housing societies, etc., exclusively for particular castes, are emerging in urban centres. The insidious effect of caste is visible even in trade unions and employers' organisati A study of trade unions in a Mysore textile mill clearly showed the influence of caste in the membership and activities of the different unions. The co-operative movement has not succeeded in India, mainly because of casteism. Only caste co-operatives have done well. Even the Community Projects have tended to have a caste colour because of the type of targets which cater only to agriculturists. Even the village workers like to have social intercourse with those who will bring them social status, that is, the higher castes.

A study of industrial workers in Bombay conducted by Dr. Prabhu revealed that the workers were "mostly against practices of caste discrimination". However, 50% objected to inter-caste marriages. 70% were willing to eat with lower castes and 73% to invite lower castes to dine in their own houses. In the village study referred to earlier, 36% said that it was good to have a hotel in the village, but 52% thought it bad as it would destroy caste discipline.

New occupations, ie. those that were not in the caste hierarchy, are said to be weakening the caste system. Due to industrialisation, many new types of occupationshave come into being. Apart from this, professions like medicine, engineering, law, etc., are open to any individual regardless of his caste. Land reforms have enabled more people to become agriculturists. However, the question whether engaging in a new occupation raises the status of an individual still remains. According to the 1951 Census, of the 5.13 crores of Scheduled Castes, 3.81 were agriculturists, and 1.32 non-agriculturists. Only 64 lakhs were engaged in occupations that could be described as those reserved for untouchables such as leather work. The problem of casteism continues even with the change of occupations.

(4) Higher Education. - Higher education has been a solvent of caste prejudices in India. Most of the movements of social reform are naturally led by the educated classes who have imbibed new social ideals in the colleges and universities. "The impact of thought has the most devastating force on social institutions." Nevertheless, its effects should not be exaggerated. The educated may have taken a good part of their life and activities outside the sphere of caste. But they still keep the more intimate core of their social life within caste. One needs only to turn to matrimonial advertisements, where doctors, engineers, higher Government officials, foreign-returned, all indicate their caste and require brides of the same castes. Even the "highly cultured" and "educated"brides want bridegrooms within their own caste. There are exceptions, to be sure, but they are few and far between. Two classmates of different castes may eat together in a hotel but will not usually be able to eat in each other's house.

To sum up: With the coming of independence, new organisations, and new movements have come into being. It was expected that these organisations would help people rise above exclusive caste feelings. Unfortunately, the trend seems to be for people to use these organisations to strengthen one's own caste.

The Hold of Caste on People

Caste is thus real and casteism is earnest even in this secular democratic republic of ours, which has as its goal the socialistic pattern of society. Ramkrishna Mukerjee, answering the question "what supplied the social force to the village community", says "...besides its self-sufficient and autonomous character, and the simplicity of its organisation which stabilised the village community system in the economic sphere and maintained the villages as independent units in society vis-a-vis the outer world, it was the jati division of society which provided the internal mechanism of the village community system and stabilised it socially and ideologically. In the village communities, it was a social need that the village units do not burst asunder because of tensions generated within them by contradictory aspirations of the people in social and material life, and this need was fulfilled by the caste ideology whereby everybody in society (however humbly or loftily placed) had a definite social spiritual position and specific work to do".

The most important reason for the persistence of the system is that it fulfils some of the basic needs of human beings. According to W.I. Thomas, every individual has four basic needs, namely, 1) the need for security, 2) the need for recognition, 3) the need for response, and 4) the need for new experiences. 1) The caste system by having an indrawn loyalty provides for social security. Without the mutual aid system provided by caste, many individuals would feel lost.

2) While the caste system does set up a hierarchy in society, yet it makes provision for the recognition of all the individuals regardless of status, in some form or other. The funeral pyre is lit by the dom, the lowest caste in the U.P. For the marriage to be propitious, the couple visit the kumhar. The midwife is always a chamar. The barber has many roles to play in the various ritual ceremonies. During times of Holi, the outcastes and the high castes play together. In the world of rituals, each step is necessary and the low castes have a part in most ritual ceremonies. The result is that even the low caste groups feel that they are wanted.

3) The loyalty of all the members of a caste group binds them together in mutual acceptance.

4) The caste system does not have within it the ability to fulfil the desire for new experiences. By the various restrictions it puts on the people, it actually diminishes the possibilities of new experiences. It may be that individuals in the caste system have got so conditioned that they are prepared to ignore this need as the caste system is satisfying in so many other ways. It must be remembered, however, that in caste there is no particular restrictions regarding creative activities such as music, handwork, etc.

Conclusion

From the above, it is clear that regardless of the many factors which are supposed to be disrupting the caste system, it has withstood all the onslaughts and it is still a force. It is strong and tenacious. From Buddha down to Mahatma Gandhi, many ardent religious workers and social reformers have tried to break the system. They have had only partial success. To believe that the demon of caste is about to die and all that is needed is to prepare for the funeral rites is to grossly underestimate the social forces that bind a caste group together and perpetuate casteism.

Lest the paper be considered a prophecy of doom, it shall end with a note of hope. In closing the Seminar on Casteism in Delhi, Prof. Srinivas, the Director, observed, "On a short-term basis the country is more likely to have more trouble with caste while on a long-term basis, adult franchise, the industrial revolution which our five-year plans are hoping to bring about, the spread of literacy and higher education among the lower castes, the legal rights given to Harijans, the privileges given to backward castes, and greater Sanskritization of the way of life of the latter, should remove the more obnoxious features of the caste system gradually."

IV

THE WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY AND THE CHRISTIAN

1) Need For A Critical Review

By

Mrs. M. G. Wyllie

What I want to do is to stress the urgent need for a critical review of the White Australia Policy. I am not plugging for any particular reform, but for an objective appraisal of the Policy. This must surely precede any reform or change.

Why is it so difficult to achieve an objective appraisal of the Policy? I think there are several reasons.

The White Australia Policy is not really part of the legal structure of our Commonwealth. It does not appear on the Statute Book. What we have is "An Act relating to Immigration, Deportation and Emigration". The White Australia Policy is not actually embodied in the Act. There is nothing in the Act which says "no" to coloured migrants as such. What is White Australia then?

White Australia is part of our national sentiment, it forms part of the basis of our self-consciousness as an Australian nation. 15 years ago Prof. Elkin referred to it as a "dogma", i.e. thoughts, feelings, sentiments which are held tenaciously by a group of people. Sometimes these ideas are irrational. They are extremely difficult to challenge. These sentiments belong to an area of life which tends to become sacrosanct and therefore cannot be easily re-examined in the light of changing circumstances and fresh knowledge. White Australia is a "catchcry" or, as Prof. Elkin called it, a "verbal symbol" to which all political parties (except Communists) and all sections of the community (except some Christian Churches) rally.

So, in a sense the White Australia Policy is intangible, i.e. not on statute book. It is part of our national heritage and it is accepted with some few exceptions by all sections of the Australian Community. This, I think, is why it is so difficult to insist that the White Australia Policy be looked at critically. But because it is difficult it does not mean that it is not desperately urgent that the Policy be reviewed and criticized. Again, because it is a matter of national sentiment and popular insistence, this evaluation and this criticism of the dogma must be made by the general public. A real and informed public opinion must be cultivated because there can be no radical change in the policy without a radical change in the sentiments and thinking of the Australian citizen.

Here are four reasons why the White Australia Policy should be critically appraised at this present time:

1. There have been momentous changes in the political scene in Asia since 1901 when policy was formulated and became part of the Australian way of life.

Then (i) Dutch controlled Indies
(ii) France was safe in Indo China
(iii) India, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya were all British Colonies.

There have been political revolutions in all these countries. The political scene has changed dramatically in the last half century. Our national sentiment, our dogma, our attitude to Asian neighbours has remained constant. We have maintained a colour bar in Australia. In the light of these revolutions, burying our head in the sand and refusing to review our national traditions is scarcely a sign of national maturity. Sheer self-interest demands that we do something about it.

2. Australia is a member of a multi-racial Commonwealth of Nations - India, Malaya, Ghana, Ceylon, Nigeria, are members of the Commonwealth as well as Canada, South Africa and New Zealand. Our White Australia must necessarily be offensive to the newer ex colonial members of the Commonwealth.

3. In the 19th Century the main argument for the White Australia Policy was an economic one - the traditional argument - the influx of coloured people, or the large scale entry of any alien people would constitute a threat to the standard of living and community well being of Australia. Possibly this was a legitimate argument in those days. But in the last ten years we have witnessed a mammoth immigration scheme and there has been no noticeable deterioration in our standard of living. Our basic wage, our wage awards, have protected our standard of living. The controlled immigration of Asians would present no greater problem than the present influx of Italian, Dutch, Germans, Greeks and Maltese.

Here we have a dilemma. The Australian Government has set out on a delibera policy of winning friends in Asia, e.g. the Colombo Plan. There has been a general easing of Immigration restrictions, but on the other hand there is still an overwhelming national sentiment in favour of excluding Asians from this countr In many ways Government policy is ahead of public opinion. We may be glad about this. But too many Australians still agree with the General Secretary of the Australian Native Associat on who said in 1954, "The permanent entry of even a small quota of these people will be a step towards national suicide".

4. In the final analysis the arguments that maintain White Australia as part of our national tradition are those of racialism. Our national dogma is rooted in the belief that somehow the white race is superior - that pure race is possible and desirable and that mixing of races is evil. This, I believe, is why Australians cling so tenaciously to the White Australia Policy and why they refuse to look at it critically. We are a prejudiced people as far as race is concerned.

The racialism is both un-Christian and unscientific. There is no such thing as pure race. The white race cannot be proved to be superior, mentally or physically and children of mixed marriages are not necessarily inferior. We cling to those ideas because we want to boost our own importance, but they are ideas which do not fit into the changing world scene. In order to justify our own attitude we point to race problems in South Africa and the U.S.A., but we forget to appreciate the harmony and absence of racial problems in the multi-racial communities such as Brazil and Hawaii.

For these four reasons I urge the review of this part of our Australian tradition.

2) Modify White Australia

By

Rev. Alan Walker

A refashioning of relationships between the white minority and the coloured majority of the human family is taking place all over the world. For centuries white and coloured people have lived on the basis of an assumed superiority and an almost accepted inferiority. Now all is changed. The white section of the human race must purge from its thought-streams the poison of racialism. The white man has no alternative but to rejoin the human race.

Australia is caught up in this changing world situation. With Australian destiny unavoidably set in the Pacific and in Asia, Australia faces a special urgency in building bridges with the East.

It is in this framework that Australia's traditional immigration policy must be examined. The so-called "White Australia Policy" is a dangerous hangover of a 19th Century mentality. While it remains unmodified it will continue to disturb Australian-Asian relationships.

No legislation should even be enacted or kept without consideration being given to its effect on others. Our immigration policy, from its inception, has needlessly offended our neighbours. Over the years Japan and China have more than once protested while India has asked pointed questions about discrimination by Australia against another member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The latest criticism has come from Commonwealth statesmen at the recent Parliamentary Conference at Canberra. It is a tragedy that in one of the few pieces of legislation by which Australia is known abroad it is adding to rather than lessening the friction between nations.

Australia today is liberalising its administration of its immigration policy toward non-European peoples. Over 6,000 Asian students are at present in Australia, while another 6,000 present are in long-term residence. The present Government is using discretionary powers with some generosity. It is not enough.

The charity of the Colombo Plan can never replace the need to remove rigid racial discrimination in immigration laws. Racial injustice continues in Australian immigration practices. There are today many children in Japan whose fathers are Australian service-men. For years the Australian Council for the World Council of Churches has sought admission and adoption in Australia for these children. The Government has steadily refused to allow them entrance. Recently, with deep shame because of Australia's refusal to open its doors the Council decided to pay the adoption costs of some of these children with American parents. Hence the children of Australian fathers and Japanese women are to be adopted into American homes because of the benighted attitudes of the Australian people and Government.

An immigration policy which rests on the discretion of the Minister becomes an arbitrary policy. A return to a policy of harshness as under the former Minister, Mr. Calwell, could inflame Asian opinion against this land. Australia urgently needs to grant by law the right of certain numbers of non-European people to become citizens of Australia. A quota system would be a declaration of our belief in racial equality. An alternative method could be a series of bi-lateral agreements between Australia and other lands, a method today used between Canada and India. By such means the sting which belongs to the present rigid law would be removed.

Australians fear outbreaks of racial violence similar to happenings in America and South Africa if non-Europeans come to these shores. Racial bitterness in South Africa and America largely arises from historic causes peculiar to each land. Individually Australians are not racially conscious. The presence of small numbers of non-white peoples would not disturb the unity of Australian society.

Australia suffers greatly today in Asia because of the "image" of itself built up in neighbours minds by an unfortunate immigration policy. That "image" will not be changed while the so-called "White Australia Policy" continue A declaration at this time by Australia that it will accept a defined number of non-European migrants, however few, would make a significant contribution to peac in Asia. Above all it would bring Australian law into closer harmony with Divine law. The New Testament clearly expresses Christian truth: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, male or female for all are one in Christ."

V

MAORI AND PAKEHA: RACE RELATIONS PROBLEM IN NEW ZEALAND

By

The Very Rev. J. G. Laughton

The first thing that needs to be said is that there is a problem. It is becoming very popular to say that "there is only one people in New Zealand, that we are all New Zealanders." There is a sense in which that is a valid and a desirable statement, but it is an over-simplification, and over-simplifications are dangerous. The fact is that while we are all New Zealanders, the two main races of New Zealand are very distinct. Each has its own personality. We are different! We look different! God made us different! We are manifestly different, we are outwardly different, in a hundred ways we are different.

Although much of our problem has its basis in the physical difference, if that were all the solution would be comparatively easy. The real differences, of course, are those of mind and heart, and in the outlook and the content of life. They are far deeper, they are far greater, and those are the things that we ignore when we say "we are one people." This is a practical problem for the Synod, for some of our people - quite sincerely - cannot understand why there should be any Maori churches, because in their opinion, "we are all one people." They cannot see why Maoris should not go to the Pakeha church the same as everybody else. They do not recognise the fact that there are differences; that there are any gulfs to be bridged; that there is anything to be overcome.*

Here is a sample of the difference in racial outlook which is a barrier. An Englishman's house is his castle. You enter when you are invited, or, if his house be a business place, you enter by paying your way in, or buying when you are in. Any Maori, on the other hand, can walk into any Maori's home anywhere. He does not need even to knock. But the Maori has learnt that he cannot do that to a Pakeha, and he cannot do that to anything Pakeha unless there is an entry fee. If he pays the fee, then he can go in. There is no entry fee to the Christian Church. There is one way that the Maori can be brought into the Pakeha congregations, and that is when you bring him in. He will not come in unless you bring him in, because he is coming into your world, and he has learned that he does not get into your world unless somebody goes out and brings him in, or unless he pays his way in.

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* See foot-note on page 26

Difference of Heritage

Even a glance at his heritage reveals how different the inmost things of his life are from the content of Pakeha life. First there is his language, and, although a portion of the race is no longer proficient in the native tongue, it is still the medium of thought and speech of a large section of the Maori people. And even in the case of those for whom the Maori language is no longer their medium of communication, the lingering background of it is in their thoughts. Thought forms survive word forms, and when you listen to some Maori folk speak English quite well and their own language very little at all, you realise that the mother tongue which they no longer fully use has by inheritance moulded their thought forms. Maori poetry, which is recited and sung in the adornment of speeches on every important Maori occasion, abounds in imagery peculiar to the Maori people. The allusions are to a way of life that come down the pathways of the Pacific out of the East and out of a life as different from that of our Pakeha origin as the Orient is from the Occident.

Maori life is encircled by immemorial customs. The Maori recites his genealog back over 40 or more generations, but he also pays reverence to customs that are as hoary with time as his ancient genealogies which begin among the mists of ancient history. And in connection with those honoured customs there are an infinite number of usages of etiquette. Every Pakeha is familiar with the difference in Maori custom in mourning for the dead, but that is only one of the customs of Maoridom which are totally different from the practices of the Pakeha in similiar circumstances. Of course there are reasons for the difference in outlook.

To a Pakeha it would be a great breach of etiquette not to eat with his guest; to a Maori it is an even greater breach to dishonour your guest by eating with him. While he is your guest you are his servant and you eat what remains after you have feasted him.

Different Ways of Life

The Maori is a communal being and his values are community values. A gathering in which he enjoys the fellowship of large numbers of his kindred is a satisfaction to him greater than individual gain is to the average Pakeha; and, while the Pakeha condemns the Maori for spending too much money on such tribal re-unions, those re-unions are the very sweetness of life to the community-minded Maori. Every good Maori devotes himself to the welfare of his community more than to self advancement. The marae, the tribal courtyard, continues to be the centre of Maori life rather than the hearth, and the development of strong family life to meet the changing circumstances of Maoridom is one of the acute needs of our time. Hospitality is the prince of virtues to the Maori, and that again because he is a community-minded individual. Some Pakehas think that the Maori will never be able to progress until he is cured of his inveterate hospitality, but if that is ever achieved, some of the best qualities of the Maori soul will have died. Some Pakehas think that it is quite impossible to understand the Maori mind. It might be said that many Maoris find it just as difficult to understand the Pakeha mind, and that because, in their essential being and characteristic outlook, the two races are indeed very different.

The fact that has to be remembered about our New Zealand life is that we have two distinctive racial groupings - the European majority and the Maori minority - but more than that, and of far greater importance, is the fact that we have two cultures. There can be no doubt that the ideal objective for New Zealand citizenship is to integrate these two cultures into a common nationhood, but in fact what some Pakehas demand is that Maori culture should be eliminated, or at most retained as a museum memorial of things that were. The inference of their attitude is that the Maori must totally conform to the Pakeha pattern, and there are even some who say that the sooner the Maori forgets his Maori ways and customs the better. In two world-wars Pakeha and Maori have fought together for the preservation of our way of life, each for the preservation of his own way of life, and the ideals for which they fought demand that we shall give to our Maori brethren the right to retain the heritage which is theirs and to live the life that has meaning and satisfaction for them, while conforming, of course, to the standards of work and commerce which must be the basis of our common life as fellow-citizens of our one homeland.

Tensions

In addition, however, to the constitutional differences between Maori and Pakeha, there are differences arising from tension which tend to widen the breach. The Maoris discovered New Zealand hundreds of years before the first Pakehas set eyes upon its shores. Not only did they discover, but in an organised migration they came to settle and to claim the land. There are 66 million acres in New Zealand, and, prior to the advent of the white man they were all Maori territory. 61 million acres are now in the hands of the Pakeha. Five-sixtysixths of the original dominion remains with the Maoris, and for the most part that remnant contains much of the unarable and less valuable of the total land area. A little imagination will enable us to appreciate the fact that it is not always easy for a Maori to view this change with equanimity. Then, although it is a fact that land has in the main the value which is created for it, and that land at the time of the early European purchases from the Maori had not a value comparable with that of today, when the Maori peruses Maori Land Court records and finds that thousands of acres passed from Maori ownership to Pakeha for a mere handful of almost valueless merchandise, it is not easy for him to avoid some resentment. Moreover, historians are today saying that some of the conflict between Maori and Pakeha in the days of the Maori Wars over the land issue was actually fomented with a view to the confiscation of land from the Maori to provide farms for European settlers, and certain it is that Royal Commissions have pronounced that some of the chief confiscations of Maori land were "ultra vires", and have pronounced for compensation which has been paid by successive Governments in recent years.

There is no question that the attitude of the great majority of European people in New Zealand towards their Maori neighbours is one of great goodwill even if it falls short of complete understanding. But a section of European people have subjected the Maoris to the kind of snobbish superiority and colour bar which works mischief in race relationships. Those who are really conversant with the situation know that many Maoris capable of taking their place in any society have suffered from prejudice. The number of Europeans who entertain

extreme and intolerant prejudices against the Maori people is relatively small but it is to be feared that quite large numbers unthinkingly entertain harmful attitudes.

Dr. Ausobell, a distinguished American observer of our New Zealand inter-racial relationships, has stated that in his opinion there is a widespread European attitude of prescribing a Maori stereotype. A Maori commits a misdemeanour and his fault is ascribed to the whole race. An employer takes on a Maori apprentice who proves a bit unsatisfactory in some respect and the employer declares that he will never take another Maori apprentice, quite forgetting that if he had a similar disappointment with a Pakeha trainee he would never dream of saying: "I'll never employ another Pakeha boy." Mention has already been made of the superiority complex of some Europeans and of their assumption that everything Maori is inferior, and their demand that the Maori must conform to Pakeha standards and usages. Do we wonder that people who are conscious of the quality of their own history and heritage and who appreciate and cherish their own way of life should resent the uninformed attitude which considers valueless the things which the Maori values highest, and demands that the Maori shall forsake his own pattern of life and be bent into a mould that is alien to his mind? Why, after all, should the Maori abandon his community life and his large-hearted hospitality and the genuine deep eternal values of his social fraternity for the standards of our competitive commercialism?

Contiguity Demands Fellowship

However, it is not the historic and cultural differences between the two races nor even the clash of interests and the tensions of prejudice which after all emanate to a degree from both sides, which is the really serious problem to be confronted at this time, but rather that we have now arrived at the place where integration of these differing racial elements in our common New Zealand community must be grappled with. At the end of the Maori War the Maori people largely withdrew and the major portion of the race has lived in voluntary isolation for the greater part of the intervening period. There is no danger of any deep conflict between two races, even as neighbours in one restricted country, so long as they are able to live at a distance one from the other, each race pursuing its own interests and retaining its own heritage with little or no contest from its neighbour. Economic necessity and the demands of higher standards of living consequent on general education have in the past generation almost completely terminated that voluntary withdrawal and self-imposed isolation of the Maori. It is estimated that today there are 19,000 Maoris within the confines of Auckland city and its suburbs. And every northern town and urban area has its considerable quota of Maori people. Maori workers fill large quotas of unskilled labour throughout the land, and the Maoris have an increasing representation in the skilled trades and the professions, and yet, although the two races are being brought into daily work-a-day contact, they are socially almost completely apart, and in that contiguity without real fellowship lies the danger of our present situation. There are plenty of superficial contacts between Maori and Pakeha even outside of those dictated by the routine of employment, but the number of inter-racial friendships at the home level is exceedingly few.

The urgent thing in our time is not that the Maori should abandon his heritage and come stripped of his personality and empty of soul to conform completely to our European customs and usages, but that the two races should really learn to know each other and that with mutual respect for our differences we should develop heart to heart friendship and fellowship. Maori with Pakeha, and Pakeha with Maori. And it is of great importance that Pakeha people of goodwill should realize just how great are the problems which the Maori people are meeting in seeking in this generation to integrate themselves into the new world with which they are confronted by the coming of the Pakeha to New Zealand. By a withdrawal which is no longer possible their fathers postponed this difficult racial adjustment. This generation has no alternative but to face it.

Urgent Adjustment Necessary

Its duties are succinctly stated in the great message left by Sir Apirana Ngata to the youth of his race: "Grow and meet your day, your hand outstretched to take the weapons of the Pakeha to clear a path for your feet, your mind given to the heritage of your ancestors as a plume for your head, and your soul given to God from whom cometh all things." The advice is, of course, for the young Maori to avail himself of education and training, the weapons with which the Pakeha has cleared the world. It is by this training that the Maori will be able to make a place for himself in this new world in which he has to live. But he is not to forget that he is a Maori and while he lives and makes himself competent and proficient in the skills and usages of the Pakeha world he is to retain his own culture, his own outlook, his own values and above all his own deep sense of community.

That advice prescribes the inevitable tension to which all those who are really attempting to make good in this racial adaptation must be subject. They are to live in two worlds. No one can know the real inwardness of Maori life without being fully aware that these young people indeed must learn to live simultaneously in two different worlds.

If we are to retain the good name that New Zealand has gained for racial relationships it is urgent that we should learn to understand better how great indeed the essential differences are between the two races, and respect the differences and the heritage of each; to learn to know one another and to establish real fellowship, rather than demand that one of the partners throw all his possessions over-board and become a pauper dependent on the charity of the other. Situated as we are now, Maori and Pakeha cheek by jowl, and each sometimes offended by the customs and pursuits of the other, and competing for the same job particularly when jobs become scarcer, it is imperative that we remember that God put us down together in this land and that we work out to a real destiny the good start in racial relationships for which we have credit in the world, and that we realise that either we are going to progress into far fuller fellowship and into racial understanding, or that we are going to be driven further apart and perhaps become enemies and curse one another. It is imperative that we realise that even if it were only for self-interest, this problem must be recognised for the problem that it is and be grappled with and conquered.

Sir Apirana Ngata concluded his great parting message with the words - "and give your soul to God from Whom cometh all things." The tension in which the Maori must live between two worlds can only be solved as he gives his heart to God Who gives grace and understanding and the strength of purpose to hold in unity that which would otherwise break asunder and fall to ruin. And it is in the spirit of Jesus Christ that the Pakeha will realise how great is the present problem of his Maori neighbour and how urgent it is that we learn who is our neighbour and what the practice of neighbourliness means for us who are Pakehas, towards our Maori brethren.

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* The Rev. D.E. Duncan, speaking of the official policy of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand, says(Ed.):

"The policies of our Church, in her dealing with the Maori people have been based on the convictions that as children of God's creation they had the same fundamental needs of the Gospel of Christ as Europeans had, and that our obligatio as a Church could not be fulfilled unless we sought to share the riches of Christ with them. It has always been recognised that when Maoris were baptised or brought to communicant membership, they were received into the Church alongside their European brethren, with the same privileges and the same responsibilities. Our Church has never countenanced the idea of a separate Maori church altogether apart and isolated from the European. The Maori who is admitted to membership is a communicant of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand; the Maori who is ordained an Elder is an Elder of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

"Until 1955 the work among the Maoris was carried on under the Maori Missions Committee. Throughout, it has been recognised as part of the life and of the responsibility of the whole church. In 1955 the Maori Synod was established and the work continues in no way a separate entity but in every respect part of the life of our Church.

"One of the reasons for the Synod's establishment was to enable the Maori people to feel a deep sense of belonging to this Church. Under the Maori Missions Committee the church was for them the European's church. The Committee shaped policy, made decisions, provided the workers, found the money, etc. Their own responsibilities were few, and their opportunities for having an effective voice in their church's affairs were fewer still. It was the Pakeha's Church, not theirs; the "missionary's Church," not "my Church." All this was altered when the Assembly established the Synod under its new constitution with authority under the Assembly, for its own work. It was then that the Maori members and adherents really entered with us into the fellowship of our Church. For them, as for us, it is now "our Church." The development from a mission to a Church has been very definite and very swift. Maori men have come forward to train as ministers, membership is growing, deep concern for the development of more worthy Christian living is in evidence, and the need to bring the many thousands baptised by our Church into communicant membership is recognised, as is the responsibility to carry the Gospel to so many of their own people who know not Christ."

VI

THE CHURCH IN AFRICA AMIDST RACIAL AND ETHNIC TENSIONS

By

Mr. Henry F. Makulu, M.B.E.

It is repeatedly said, though not without reason, that every problem in Africa has racial implications and the problem of race relations cannot be isolated from economic, political and all other problems. Nobody in Africa escapes this no matter what his race or ethnic affiliation may be or in what part of Africa he may live. One may then ask, what is the nature of racial and ethnic tension in Africa? In order to answer this question let me spotlight some specific areas where tension is acute and attempt to understand (i) the historical significance of racial and ethnic tension; (ii) the nature of the Church and the forms which it may take in order to relate its life and mission to the life of the nation.

I. Historical Background To Racial and Ethnic Tensions in Africa

Change in all parts of Africa is taking place at such a fantastic pace that it is bringing in its wake harrassing experiences and confusion among many people in Africa itself. Events of tragic consequence cause difficulties in human relationships to be aggravated. With tensions between tribes, ethnic groups and races, the whole continent is in the state of ferment. What are the underlying causes? What are the origins of these problems?

Briefly, the origin of racial and ethnic tensions may be traced to a number of factors, but in essence they are, for the most part, the result of interaction of several ethnic and racial groups as they are forced to live together in their pursuit of economic opportunities ushered in by the technological civilisation. This tension, of course, has superceded the previous tribal factions which were more localised and, therefore, of less consequence. In addition, there is the factor of nationalism and national consciousness which evolved from the widening of experiences of the hitherto subject peoples and their new assertion for power and self-determination; while, on the other hand, the ruling power, still in control of the territory, holds on to this power for too long. This naturally strains the patience of the people and renders them vulnerable to the machination of those who seek to achieve power through extra-constitutional means, and consequently a grave situation is created.

In some territories in Africa, an administrative system called "indirect rule" was used. By this system the colonial power exercises its rule through tribal authority which was put up by the central government which had the real authority.

The basic aim of this system was, or rather, was thought to be, to train the indigenous people in the arts of administration, and possibly the workings of the machinery of a democractic form of government. The ideal was a noble one but in the majority of cases there was no intention manifested of instructing these local authorities in the art of government with a view to one day handing the reins of administration to the people. It was, rather, an effective method of administering vast and far flung areas without needing to involve colonial personnel.

This may be an unfair criticism of the system, but its effects can be seen from the fact that the tribal chiefs have not supplied political leadership at the time when this is needed. There are today, many countries in Africa without either traditional tribal authority, or any other type of effective political leadership. The leadership has been assumed by the educated; the trade unionists, the teachers and those who have taken advantage of the new technological advancement. We mention this to pin-point one of the reasons for the ethnic tensions at the local level where the interests of local or tribal groups begin to clash as some try to reinstate the natural authority which tribal heads or their families enjoyed; and those who have, by reason of education and grasp of the new patterns and methods of technological life, established popular support and following of the vast majority of their generation. This is largely a tension between old and young.

In these ethnic group tensions there has not been the stress on the superiori "myth" as the rationalising basis of group interests: it is rather desire to assert group pride. On the other hand, racial tension between white and black races has emanated from the fact that relations between them in Africa have been on a "master and servant" basis, or worse still, the indigenous people have been regarded as part of the resources for exploitation. These are some of the historical roots of the racial struggle that still continues in some parts of Africa. It is important to make it quite clear at this point that race differences are not the sole cause of the tension between peoples. There are other issues which are basically not racial at all but find expression under the guise of race difference, around which myths have been built.

II. Spotlight on Some Areas of Tension in Africa

Let us now deal concretely with some definite situations of tensions in Africa. There are areas in which tensions are predominantly ethnic, and others more racial. These examples do not imply that these patterns are only found in the areas described, but that these are more striking instances of what exists elsewhere as well.

(a) Areas of Ethnic Tensions:

One striking example of group tension of ethnic character is found in Ruanda-Urundi. This part of Africa was once a colony of Germany which, at the end of the first World War became a mandate or trusteeship territory under the supervision of the United Nations and was directly administered by Belguim as part of their Congo administration. The original native inhabitants there are the Bahutu of Bantu race, but for more than five centuries it has been ruled

by the Batusi of Nilotic race from the Eastern cultural area of Africa. There are today over two million Bahutu and less than half a million Batusi, the traditional overlords. The Belgian administration used the Batusi overlords in the system of indirect rule, and the Roman Catholic missions have followed this pattern by pushing the Batusi to positions of leadership. For many years this practice has been maintained without tension, but recently the Government administration reversed this policy and there has been shown an effort to push forward the Bahutu. This naturally infuriated the Batusi and tension began to mount. The Bahutu are now asserting their rights and in their organised political party the age-old local imperialism of the Batusi is challenged. This has led to the breakout of factions. In two weeks rioting and fighting in 1959, hundreds of people were injured and others killed. So far the real situation of that civil war has not yet been revealed, but reliable sources estimate heavy casulaties, and the number of refugees from Ruanda-Urundi was close to 8,000. This situation has not quite returned to normal.

This is an example of the inter-group conflict not on the basis of colour (i.e. race), but on the basis of ethnic differences rooted in historical circumstances.

Within a larger ethnic group there can be tensions between tribes. One vivid example of this is the Congo situation. People in the West perhaps have not fully understood the role which tribalism plays in the politics of some African countries. The situation has been aggravated by the arbitrary drawing of geographical boundaries by the colonial powers at the time of the scramble for Africa in the last century. There was no understanding shown nor attention paid to the importance of the natural cohesion of the tribes based on their common ancestors.

Tribes were split between completely different systems of administration and were directed into destinies which were politically poles apart one from another. A case in point is the Bakongo who may be found on both sides of the Congo River - one administered by Belgium and the other by France. This is true of many other areas in Africa. This we point out because it has left a legacy of delicate problems which the new nations in Africa will be forced to face.

(b) Areas of Racial Tension

It is important here to underline one fact, namely that areas of racial tension are not without ethnic tensions of one kind or another, but they are simply superceded by the greater and more pressing tension between racial groups. A characteristic feature of the areas of racial tension is that several tribes are driven into a solidarity of mutual defence, (consequently tribal tensions give way to a pan-tribal or pan-ethnic struggle) against the dominating force of the other race. This creates a nation-spirit under which tribal misunderstandings become submerged in the face of a common enemy. There are three areas which provide examples of this type of situation, namely, South Africa, the Central African Federation, and Kenya in East Africa. In all these three countries there are points of similiarity, but there are such striking differences that make it unrealistic to treat them as if they had the same problem arising from the same historical factors. In any case, each one of these countries has its own methods of solving its problems and, therefore, requires separate

treatment, although there are a great points on which one country can take a lesson from the other.

East Africa Situation

In British East Africa, which consists of three territories - Kenya, Tanganyi and Uganda, racial tension exists mostly in Kenya. In Uganda there is tension but it is ethnic rather than racial. In Tanganyika there seems to be a harmonious relationship between people of the various groups, mainly due to the appearance of statesmanlike leadership out of the majority group and the acceptance by minori groups of this leadership.

Kenya is 250,000 square miles (about 560,000 square kl.) The population is about six and a half millions, of these 60,000 are whites and 150,000 Asians. Over half of the land in Kenya is desert or semi-desert and useless for agricultur The best part of the remainder is what is known as the "white highlands" where the whites live and farm. Africans live in some of the poorest parts of the land. So, here the cause of tension is firstly the issue of land distribution, and secondly the Africans' demand for political power which has for long remained in the hands of the white minority. The position in Kenya seems to indicate that some solution may be found. This, the Christians should press for in order that there may be peace and co-operation and thus avoid recurrence of the unhappy spectacle such as the Mau Mau movement.

Central Africa Situation

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in Central Africa, covers the territories of Southern Rhodesia, a self-governing country and predominantly controlled by a white minority of just over 200,000 in a combined population of just under 3 millions; Northern Rhodesia, a British Protectorate which stretches to the borders of the Katanga, with a total population of just under two and a half millions, some 72,000 of which are whites; and Nyasaland, also a British Protectorate, which reaches to the border of Tanganyika with a total population of 2,700,000 of which only 8,600 are whites. Taken together there is a total population of nearly 8 millions of which the whites number over 290,000.

Tension arises from political and economic interaction of the whites and the blacks and from the influence of the South African way of life (see below), since the bulk of the white population in these areas are of South African origin who came in search of economic advantages. They have established a social pattern that has a marked resemblence to apartheid. In recent years the British Government's declared policy that it will guide these people towards some form of self-government naturally increased tension between the racial groups. This tension is markedly a feature of the urban and industrial areas, but the influence of urban tension spreads rapidly and affects the remotest village, too. The present situation in this part of British Central Africa is tense, while there are hopes for a solution, especially with regard to the political advancement of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Statesmanship of a very high order and foresight is needed to avert a head-on clash. The European there needs to come to terms with the realities of the situation, such as the inevitable coming of an African majority Government. The sooner this is realised the better for establishing

harmonius relations and security for all peoples.

In this connection mention must be made that the ecumenical movement through the services of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, has helped Christians of these territories to face their responsibilities, by way of a consultation of political and Church leaders early in 1960.

South Africa Situation

In South Africa, a country of acute racial tension, racial separation has been given both the status of principle as well as that of legal sanction. "Apartheid" - literally "apartness" - is the declared policy of the government of the Union of South Africa. This system has a complicated history which I shall not discuss at present, but merely state that the desire for expansion of the territory after the Dutch landed and had lived for many years at the Cape, together with the desire to escape from British rule, brought these people into conflict with the Bantu tribes. It had established in the constitution of the new republics which the Boers had founded in the Transvaal and Orange State "that there shall be no equality either in Church or State between black and white people". The Church leaders of these nations had searched the Bible to find some biblical bases for justifying this exclusiveness. The Boer Trekker was naturally pietistic in his religious life and to him all the successes in his fight with the Bantu were triumphs of "Isreal". Often he lived a precarious life in the unknown jungles and to a great extent this moulded his life. But a fact of greater importance is the reaction to British imperialism which gave the Afrikaner a sense of inferiority, and in acute instances, a tendency to become bitter against the British, and therefore against the English-speaking in South Africa if they do not accept the policy of "apartheid".

Apartheid is an ideology that has practical difficulties but the Nationalist Government has not relented in pushing it even if in the process people have to be uprooted, even if families who have lived together for decades have to be separated. Life is rigidly regimented into the "group areas" and the African, who by law is an alien in all the urban and industrial centres, suffers humiliation, & untold indignities. The Nationalist Government has used its power to make laws which militate against the non-whites. To give a few examples: The "Group Areas Act, 1950" classifies people into racial groups and purports by legal means to move them into the assigned areas into which only members of that racial group may live; "The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, 1949", prohibits marriage between a European and a non-European and makes the solemnisation of such a marriage a criminal offence; the "Bantu Education Act, 1953" provides for a system of education specifically for the Africans (which is by no means equal to that of the whites) and makes admission of non-Europeans to white universities a breach of the law; the "Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956" excluses Africans from the term 'employee', thus precludes them from enjoying or sharing in the privilege or the right to join or organise a trade union, or in the advantageous conditions of employment, or to be a party to any process of collective bargaining such as the right to strike. There is also a law which reserves all skilled jobs for white workers, commonly referred to as "job apartheid".

The population composition of the Union of South Africa shows that numerically the whites are in the minority of at least three to one, although they hold power to the exclusion of the non-Europeans. Of the total population of about fourteen millions, just over nine millions are African (indigenous); just over three millions white; one million Coloureds or persons of mixed race; and just under half a million Asians. The tension is most acute between the nine million indigenous Africans and the Afrikaner nationalists. Apartheid fails, not only because of inhuman elements in it, but because it is always to the advantage of the one race at the expense of the others. It expects to confine the nine million blacks into the native reserve which is much less than 15% of the land of the country and the three million whites to have exclusive access to the rest of the land. It demands African labour in the mines and factories but denies them the right of freedom in these centres. It denies all the non-whites the right to vote. All these and many other disabilities have made the racial situation in South Africa the most explosive of any in that continent. In March 1960 at Sharpeville and other places this tension burst open and led the country into bloodshed and shocked the whole world. National consciousness has been pressing among the black people even in South Africa and no manner of suppression will keep them indefinitely acquiescent in the face of humiliation, deprivation of the fundamental human rights.

There are eight member churches of the W.C.C. in South Africa, which are all aware of the position of the World Council on racial and ethnic issues and of which there were some delegates present at Evanston. Included in these are three bodies of the Dutch Reformed Churches which, in varying degrees, have given support to the Government's policy of apartheid. There has, however, been a shift from the support of the segregation policy on Biblical grounds and this has removed one of the strains which might have made Christian witness almost impossible for them to bear. There has also been some tension in church relations between the Dutch Reformed Churches and the Church of the Province of the Cape (Anglican). Through the encouragement of the World Council, the member churches in South Africa held a special consultation in December 1960, which may very well go down in history as one of the triumphs of the Churches in that racially-torn country. The meeting brought together ten outstanding leaders from each of the member churches for one solid week. People of all races met and lived together. This alone is significant. The consultation released a statement which is the bravest statement the Church has so far made in South Africa and shows the earnestness with which these Christians are facing the most delicate issue in that country. Let me quote one clause from the Preamble of the statement, which strikingly shows the significance and the spirit of those who met there:

> "The general theme of our seven days together has been 'The Christian attitude toward race relations'. We are united in rejecting all unjust discrimination. Nevertheless widely divergent convictions have been expressed on the basic issues of apartheid. They range on the one hand from the judgment that it is unacceptable in principle, contrary to the Christian Calling, and unworkable in practice, to the conviction on the other hand, that a policy of differentiation can be defended from the Christian point of view, that it provides the only realistic solution

"to the problem of race relations and is therefore in the best interests of the various population groups."

In a seventeen-point statement which followed the Preamble, the consultation deals with all the relevant matters which made up the 'apartheid' structure. In the third section it deals with questions which affect the life of South Africa and the churches, such as the Judicial Commission on the Sharpeville and Langa shootings; justice in trial; position of Asians in South Africa; freedom of worship; freedom to preach the Gospel; relationship of churches: co-operation of churches in the future; on residential areas of the various racial groups; on migrant labour system.

In section four, the members of the consultation give common thanks to God for enabling them to meet together in that kind of Christian fellowship and they resolved to continue in this fellowship.

* * *

For the areas to which Mr. Makulu's article refers, the following books will be of help to those who are not too familiar with Africa. (Editor)

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